

Evidential consistency?

The national picture of ROTI transcript production in England and Wales

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Introduction

- Record of Taped Interview (ROTI) transcripts are routinely produced as evidential documents in trials. Treated as 'unproblematic copies' of the interview recordings (Haworth, 2018).
- Current 'For The Record' project in SILC aimed at improving ROTI transcript practices.
- However, national picture of how ROTI transcripts are treated and produced by police forces is unclear.

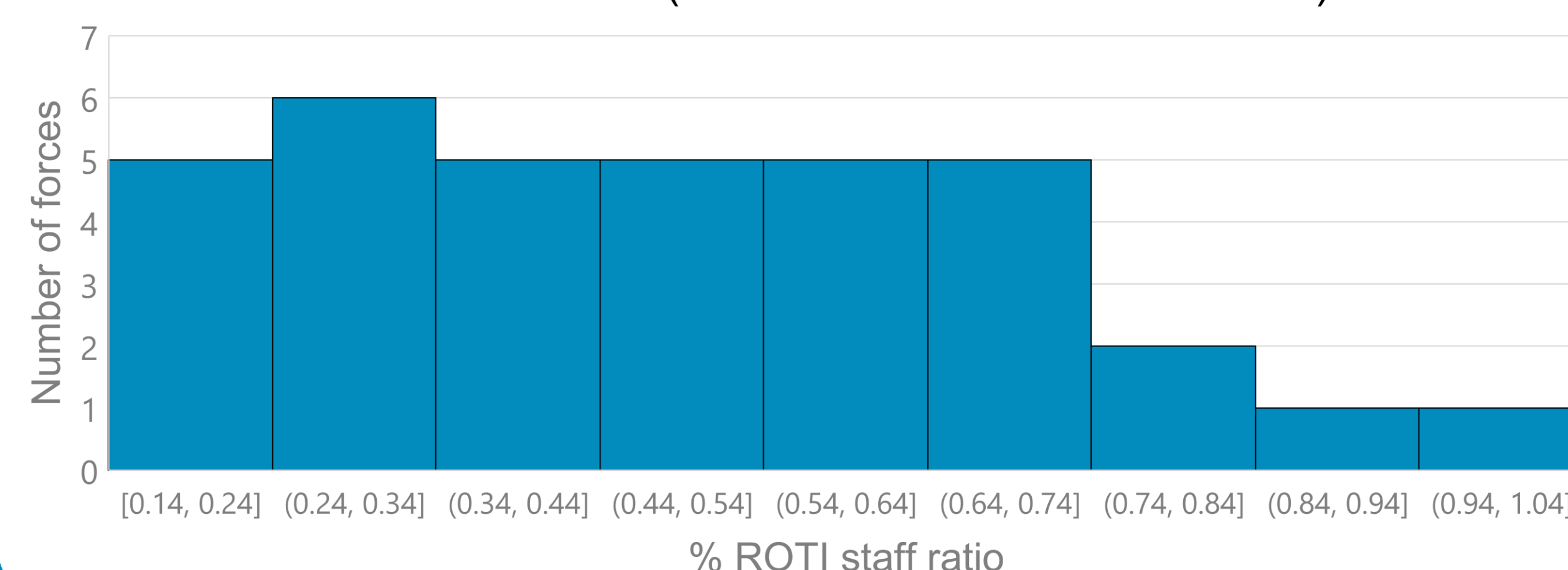
Method

- Freedom of Information (FOI) requests sent to every police force (N=43) in England and Wales. 10 questions designed to elicit information about ROTI staff, transcript production, knowledge and skills requirements, and training.
- Focus was to establish the national picture regarding ROTI transcript production.
- Responses from 36 forces.

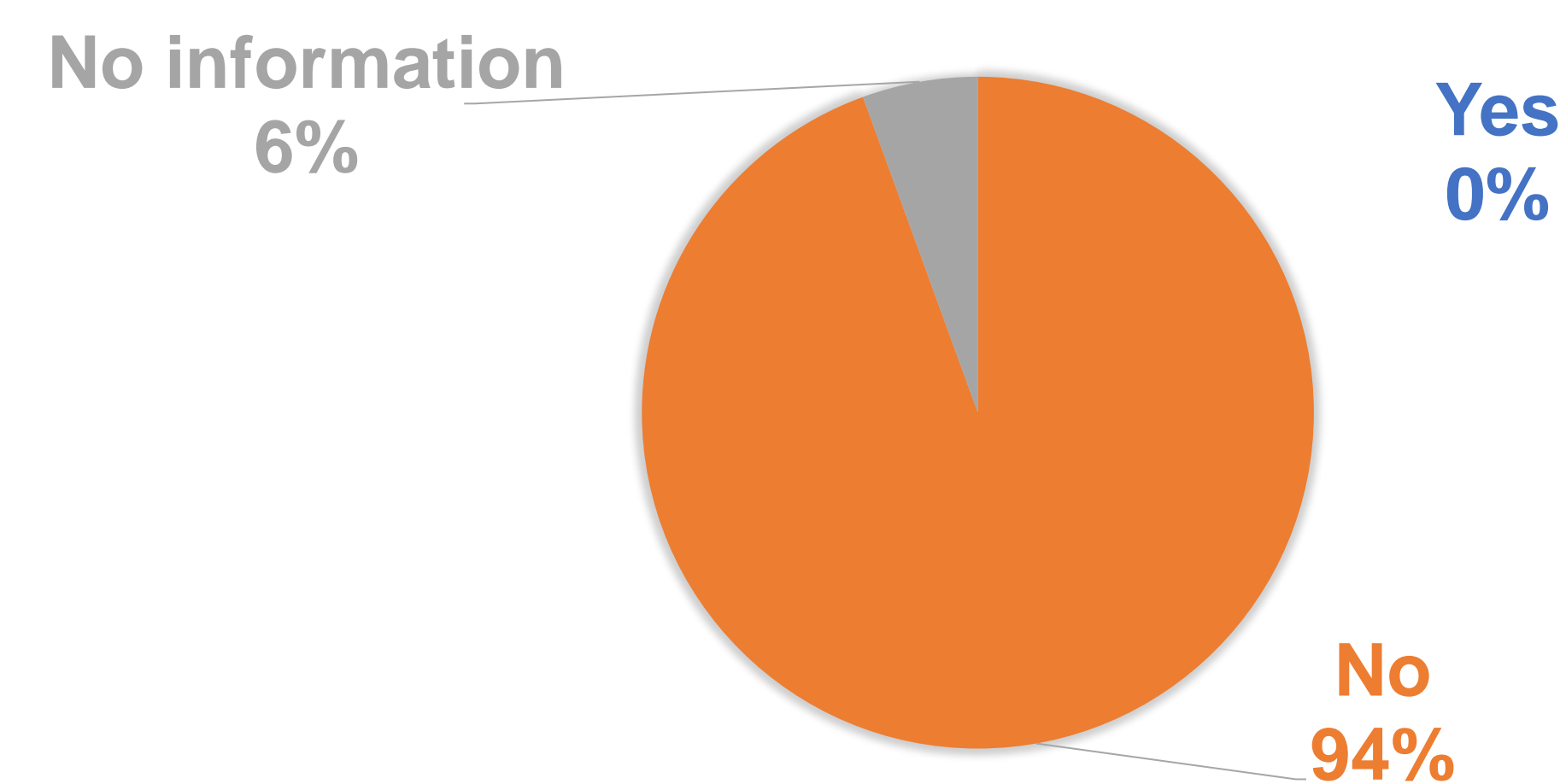
Findings

Q: How many ROTI transcribers are employed by [police]?

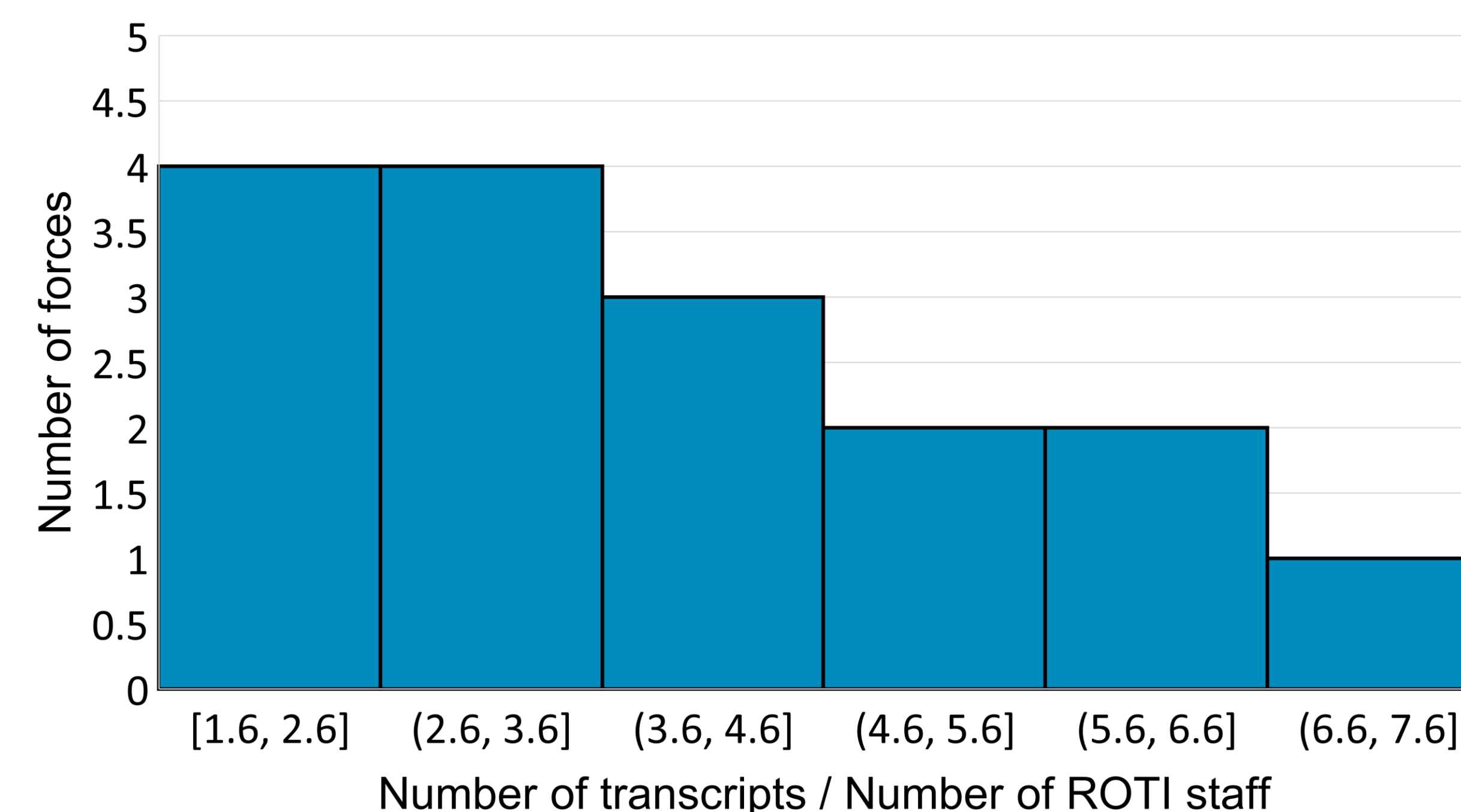
% ROTI staff ratio (no. of ROTI staff/no. of officers)



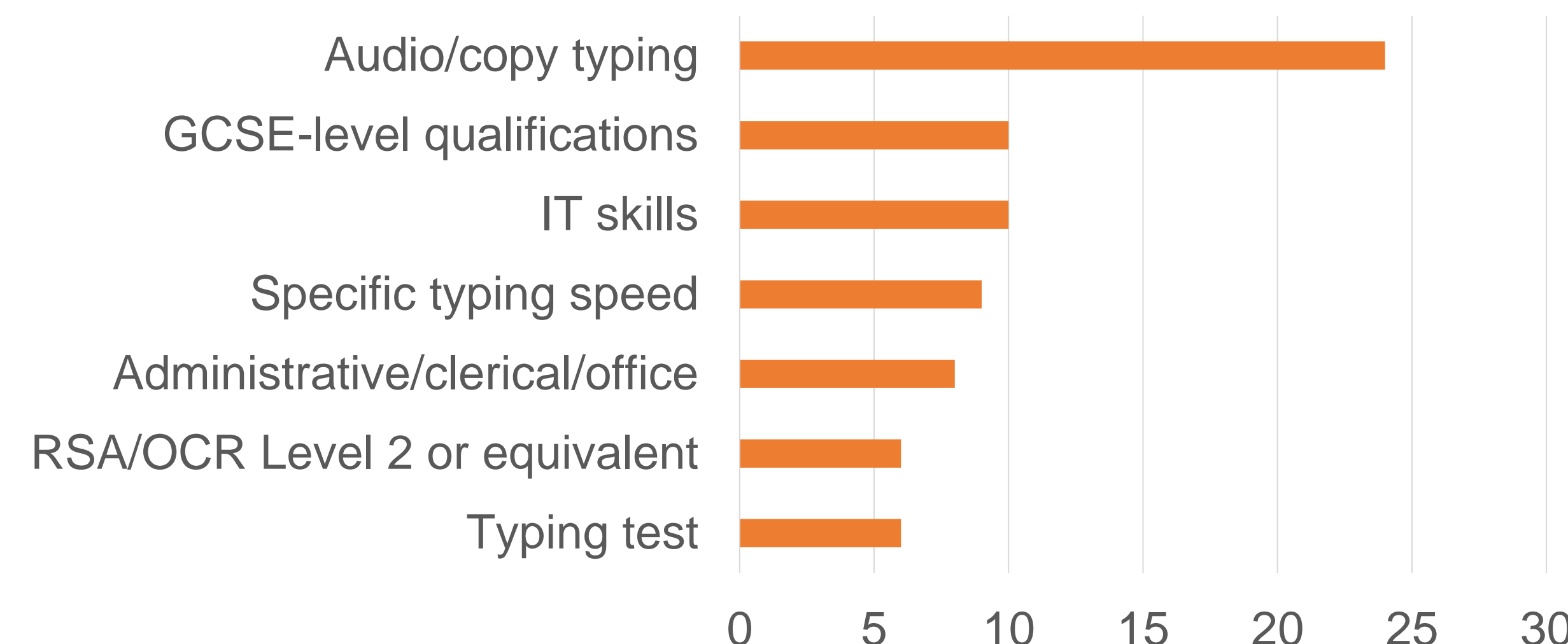
Q: Does [police] use automatic transcription systems?



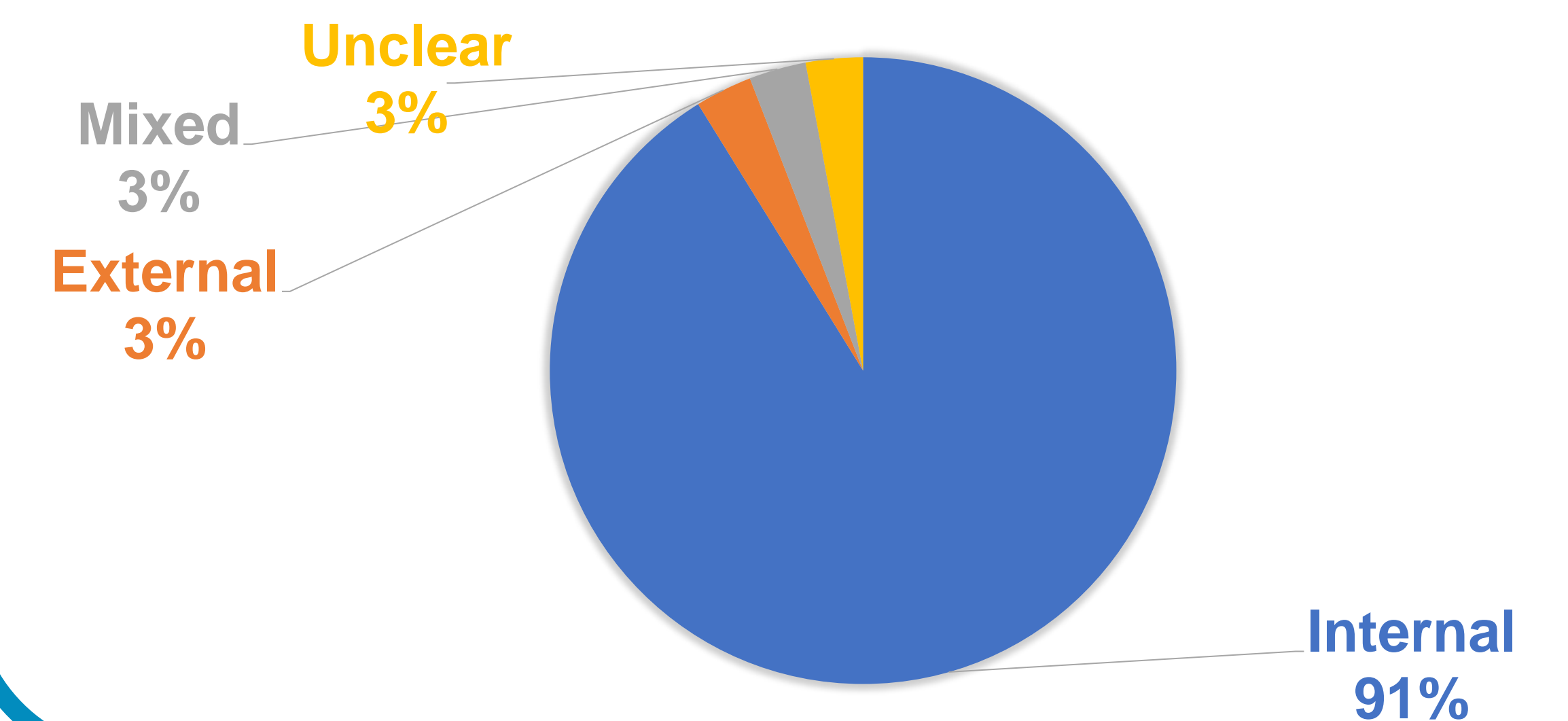
Q: Ratio of transcripts produced per week to number of ROTI transcribers employed by [police]?



Q: What job-specific skills or qualifications do you require ROTI/ROVI transcribers to have?



Q: What training is provided for a new ROTI/ROVI transcriber at [police]?



A lack of consistency?

"Senior Officers in [POLICE FORCE] favour verbatim interviews. All no comment interviews are transcribed in full, whatever the offence, as per local judicial direction."

"The summarising transcription skills remain virtually the same because the same criteria stand. The CPS make decisions on the focus within transcription and the summarisers work to that"

"[POLICE FORCE] are not planning to use automatic transcription systems to produce ROTI/ROVI as the typists gain knowledge of the case so they can summarise points and add verbatim where needed."

Conclusions

- ROTI production seen as a predominantly admin-style role with GSCE-level qualification requirements. Very different to expert transcript criteria.
- Lack of consistency among forces in some areas (e.g. need to summarise), others more consistent (e.g. a resistance to use automatic systems).
- Minimal external input into ROTI training provision.